

MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY GROUP

May 21, 1998
MAG Office
302 North First Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Debbie Kohn, Avondale, Chairperson
Usama Abujbara, Cave Creek
*Bill Mitchell, Chandler
*Peter Putterman, Fountain Hills
*Glenn Keough, Gilbert
Christopher Ware, Glendale
*Henry Padilla, Goodyear
*Horatio Skeete, Litchfield Park
*Danica Bunjevic, Maricopa County

*Jim Hull, Mesa
Sandy Teetsel, Peoria
Max Brawley, Phoenix
Jamie Oman-Saltmarsh, Scottsdale
John Laue, Tempe
Reyes Medrano for Ralph Velez, Tolleson
*Sabra Mousavi, ADOT
Eddie Caine, RPTA

*Members not present

OTHERS PRESENT

Catherine Connolly, Arizona League of Cities
and Towns
Cynthia Haglin, Chandler
Margaret Coulter, Chandler
Mark Goldstein, International Research Center
Ray Quay, Phoenix

David H. Deans, US West
Heidi Pahl, MAG
Audrey Skidmore, MAG
Rita Walton, MAG
Paul Ward, MAG

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:11 a.m. by Chairperson Debbie Kohn.

2. Approval of Minutes of March 26, 1998

It was moved by Jamie Oman-Saltmarsh, seconded by Reyes Medrano and unanimously recommended to approve the March 26, 1998 meeting minutes.

3. Telecommunication Legislation

Catherine Connolly, Executive Director of the League of Arizona Cities and Towns (the League) gave a brief overview of telecommunication legislation. She stated that it was a long and hard struggle to pass Senate Bill 1137.

Ms. Connolly stated that the League entered into negotiations with the telecommunication industries two years ago. She also stated that the League brought together a group of cities to create a model ordinance which set rules for entry into right-of-way (ROW) and a rental fee system for use of ROW. She stated that the group followed the rental fee concept developed in Tennessee. She further stated that telecommunication providers had concerns about League ordinances. She announced that the two parties were unable to agree and consequently resorted to legislation.

Jamie Oman-Saltmarsh asked what the telecommunication providers did not like about the original ordinance. Catherine Connolly stated that the telecommunication providers did not like the rental fee imposed by that ordinance. Ms. Connolly announced that Senate Bill 1137 limits the cities/towns ability to tax or fee telecommunication providers to the imposition of a transaction privilege tax.

Mark Goldstein asked if there is a cap on the transaction privilege tax. Catherine Connolly responded that there is no cap on the transaction privilege tax.

Ms. Connolly announced that some city mayors and US West struck a deal where the League promised the limitation to transaction privilege tax on telecommunication if US West would back off of preemption of right-of-way regulation.

Catherine Connolly explained the provisions of Senate Bill 1137. She stated that the first page of the bill described fiber optic licensing, stating that permit fees have to be reasonable. Reasonable is defined as a license that is already in place. Ms. Connolly stated that a city that does not currently have a license in place can use the standards from another city which does have a license in place, therefore both cities permit fees will be reasonable.

Max Brawley asked if fees on Interstate carriers are measured by linear feet or by gross receipts. Ms. Connolly stated that all existing agreements were grand-fathered in. She also stated that fees differ by jurisdiction and the big issue is dollars. Ms. Connolly mentioned that construction permits have to be reasonably related to actual costs.

Catherine Connolly stated that cities or towns can trade tax dollars for in kind services. In kind agreements are allowed if both parties concur, and cities/towns cannot hold telecommunication providers hostage. She stated that it grandfathers what is already in place.

Catherine Connolly stated that the cable companies will be treated as a telecommunication provider when dealing with telecommunication licenses under Senate Bill 1137.

Ms. Connolly stated that licenses have to be competitively neutral and non-discriminatory. She stated that when issuing a license a city or town may impose reasonable, neutral and nondiscriminatory requirements as listed on page 4 of the provisions of Senate Bill 1137.

Max Brawley stated that there were 3 classes of licenses:

1. Cable
2. Fiber
3. Telecommunication

Mr. Brawley asked what happens when a telecommunication provider needs a license for 2 different areas. He also asked how do cities write an agreement for a dual license. Catherine Connolly responded that the League will work on those interrelationships.

4. The Electronic Village Coalition

Ray Quay from the City of Phoenix stated that he is not asking for action from MAGTAG on the electronic village. Mr. Quay explained that the electronic village was created to enhance community. He mentioned that Blacksburg and Charlottes Web were successful examples of electronic villages. He stated that the Phoenix Metroplex has a lot of information that is not well organized, and therefore it is not easy for people to find local information on the Internet.

Mr. Quay stated that there are four projects within the electronic village project. He announced the projects as, 1) web based local search engine, 2) web based local community discussion board, 3) universal access, and 4) exploration of an electronic village coalition.

He stated that all electronic villages that he was familiar with are located in small communities. He further announced that there were no examples of successful electronic communities that were large in size. Mr. Quay thought the answer to a successful electronic village in Phoenix would be a model that glues together existing information.

David Deans from US West stated that there are other large communities who have successful electronic villages, such as the Silicon Valley Project and Liberty Net.

Mr. Deans asked how the electronic village project plans to build on the efforts of Arizona Telecommunication Community Computing (AzTeC Computing). Ray Quay responded that he is working with AzTeC Computing, and he mentioned that one of the differences between AzTeC and the electronic village, is that AzTeC does not provide Point to Point Protocol (PPP) access. AzTeC Computing has a text based interface with no graphics, therefore the data is more difficult for the information disadvantaged to understand.

David Deans asked how the electronic village project was budgeted and funded. Ray Quay responded that the first three projects are funded by the partners and the fourth project, the coalition, does not have funding.

Debbie Kohn asked Ray Quay to state the primary goals of the electronic village project. Ray Quay stated that one of the goals is for the coalition to oversee the creation of the search engine. He announced that the coalition provides input as to what information comprises the database for the search engine. He also stated that another goal which may be difficult to attain is universal access, which will provide information for the information disadvantaged.

Jamie Oman-Saltmarsh stated that she supports the efforts of the electronic village project. Ms. Oman-Saltmarsh asked what the time frame is for the electronic village project. Ray Quay said he would like to bring everyone together in a forum or workshop at the end of June, 1998.

Debbie Kohn asked Ray Quay to report back to MAGTAG in approximately 6 months on the progress of the electronic village project.

5. Reports from the Public Access Breakout Group

Max Brawley provided an update on the Electronic Commerce Workshop. He stated that approximately 20 people attended the workshop. Mr. Brawley stated that handouts from the Electronic Commerce Workshop were available.

Debbie Kohn mentioned that she checked into pricing for a private company to put city codes on the Internet. She stated that she found a private company that agreed to give a discount and convert the city codes to electronic format if needed. Ms. Kohn will provide an update on the cost of getting a company to place city codes on Internet at the next MAGTAG meeting.

6. Reports from the Outreach Breakout Group

Jamie Oman-Saltmarsh mentioned that she spoke to Tom Belshe at the League of Arizona Cities and Towns about topics for the Arizona City/County Management Association (ACMA) conference. She stated that ACMA does not have an interest in MAGTAG presenting a topic on telecommunications at this time. She further stated that the ACMA is focused on getting some of their information onto the Internet. Ms. Oman-Saltmarsh hoped that next year ACMA would be interested in telecommunication topics.

Debbie Kohn stated that MAGTAG should be trying to broaden their audience for telecommunication issues. Ms. Kohn mentioned that she sent a letter to James M. Bourey asking to make a presentation at a MAG Management Committee meeting and a MAG Regional Council meeting. Mr. Bourey agreed to her making a brief presentation at a Management Committee meeting.

Ms. Kohn stated that she gave a presentation to the MAG managers to update them on telecommunications issues of regional concerns and the actions that MAGTAG is taking to address these issues.

7. Reports from the Right-of-Way Breakout Group

Debbie Kohn stated that she, Ellen Damron and Heidi Pahl have been making follow up phone calls to those member agencies who have not submitted their responses to the MAGTAG Wireless Telecommunications Survey. She stated that to date 16 out of 28 respondents have completed and returned the Wireless Telecommunications MAGTAG Survey. She also stated that when the survey tabulations are completed, they will be a resource for member agencies when they need information on wireless telecommunications sites on local, county or state land.

Max Brawley stated that the attachments to the Wireless survey are pre-legislation and therefore will not be applicable, however the wireless focus might still be accurate.

8. Elected Officials Priorities

Debbie Kohn suggested that elected officials priorities for telecommunications issues be addressed under the strategic planning agenda item. Ms. Kohn stated that it was important to determine the priorities of MAGTAG to ensure that they coincided with the priorities of the MAG Regional Council. Reyes Medrano suggested addressing the topic at the League of Arizona Cities and Towns workshop in the summer of 1998.

9. Potential Update of Strategic Plan for MAGTAG

Debbie Kohn asked if anyone knew of a facilitator that would be willing to guide the strategic planning process at the next MAGTAG meeting. Jamie Oman-Saltmarsh said that the City of Scottsdale may be able to provide a facilitator for the next meeting. The Chair stated that the facilitation process should probably take three hours. In light of all the changes in

telecommunications in the past two years Debbie Kohn indicated that it is necessary to revisit the strategic plan.

10. MAG Teleconferencing and Telecommuting Project

Paul Ward stated that the scope of the teleconferencing/telecommuting project is being defined. Mr. Ward stated that the Regional Council has approved the Draft FY 1999-2003 MAG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for a conformity analysis. He stated that the draft TIP includes \$1.5 million for a teleconferencing/telecommuting project for years 2001-2003. Mr. Ward stated that the project is eligible for acceleration and currently MAG staff are trying to accelerate the project to 1998. He announced that MAG has received guidance from the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) to go ahead with a proposal for funding for this project.

Mr. Ward stated that a proposal for funding will include three phases: a design phase, a telecommuting phase and an implementation phase. He mentioned that the first phase, design, will provide detailed explanations for how the teleconferencing/telecommuting project is to proceed, stating the costs, equipment, facilities, maintenance, training and staff needed. Mr. Ward further explained that the third phase, implementation, is dependent on the results of the design phase and stated that a consultant will be hired to complete the design phase.

Rita Walton said that she expects it should take 3-6 months for a consultant to complete this phase. She stated that there is a great deal of interest in making this teleconferencing facility available to as many people as possible. Ms. Walton also stated that MAG staff will be issuing the proposal for funding and a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the design portion and will be reviewing the RFP's, both with input from MAGTAG.

Eddie Caine asked what the scope of the project would look like and at what point could he expect funding for the telecommuting phase. Paul Ward responded that the design phase is first and will include a section covering telecommuting and education. Rita Walton added that FHWA wants to see a full design concept including telecommuting.

Max Brawley asked who would represent the cities or towns in this teleconferencing project. Rita Walton responded that MAGTAG members would probably be the most likely representatives for this project.

11. Teleconferencing Demonstration

Debbie Kohn stated that she, Mark Goldstein, Eddie Caine and some MAG staff visited a teleconferencing vendor following the March 26th, 1998 MAGTAG meeting. Ms. Kohn announced that they teleconferenced with Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) in California using the vendor's Picture Tel equipment. Ms. Kohn felt that the demonstration went smoothly and was similar in content to a meeting style.

Rita Walton stated that she had a chance to speak to CVAG regarding their teleconferencing project. Ms. Walton stated there were 3 big lessons that CVAG learned namely; to put more money into training at both user and administrator levels, to commit to a bridge up-front and that every agency should have an in-house expert.

Sandy Teetsel stated that accepting teleconferencing in the workplace is a culture change that will take some time to adjust to.

12. Year 2000 Computer Concerns

Sandy Teetsel stated that Year 2000 computer concerns should be added to the strategic planning agenda item. Ms. Teetsel mentioned that she would like to take on the role of heading up a Y2K subgroup. Debbie Kohn stated that she was unsure of the correct procedure for starting a subgroup especially without prior approval from the MAG Regional Council.

Mark Goldstein mentioned that the Scottsdale Chamber of Commerce and ATIC are beginning to plan for and will co-sponsor an early Fall workshop on Y2K issues. Debbie Kohn asked if MAGTAG wants to co-sponsor with ATIC at the Fall workshop.

13. Date of Next Meetings

It was stated that meetings are held bimonthly. The remainder of meetings for 1998 will be held on July 16, 1998 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, September 17, 1998, and November 19, 1998.

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.